Ship owners are now receiving returns far below breakeven levels for their vessels. While instances of bankruptcies have occurred of international ship owners, the Indian industry is struggling to cope with the downturn.

Pending NH projects

†1125. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of the sanctioned length of 30,000 kms. for road projects of National Highways, a length of 9,000 kms. is pending due to land disputes, clearance from Forest Department, etc.;

(b) if so, the steps taken by concerned departments to overcome these reasons;

(c) the targets fixed for completion of the entire project; and

(d) the number of meetings held by Government with the concerned States during last year and the level of the officials with whom the meetings took place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) The status of implementation of a total length of 32939 kms of National Highways identified by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), under various phases of National Highways Development Project (NHDP) is indicated in the given Statement-I (*See* below). Out of a total length of 6283 kms under implementation, 4/6 laning has been completed for a partial length of 2130 kms. The reasons for delay in completion of certain stretches include that due to delay in acquisition of land, utility shifting, environment and forest clearances, poor performance of contractors etc.

(b) The steps taken to expedite the projects are indicated in the given Statement-II (*See* below).

(c) NHAI has completed 4 laning of almost 98% of Golden Quadrilateral and the entire 4 laning of Golden Quadrilateral is targeted for December, 2009. NHDP Phase II comprising North-South East-West corridor is also targeted for substantial completion by December, 2009. Target dates of completion for other phases of NHDP are as under:—

NHDP Phase III	—	December, 2013
NHDP Phase V	—	December, 2012
NHDP Phase VI	—	December, 2015
NHDP Phase VII	—	December, 2014

(d) The details of meetings at the level of Minister and Secretary taken with the State Governments are indicated in the given Statement. (*See* below). Meetings were also held with

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

various State Government Authorities at various levels during the last year to resolve the issues posing constraints in implementing the projects. The project implementation units of the NHAI also regularly interact with the concerned State Government for resolving State level matters.

Statement-I

Details of Overall Status of NHDP

Project	Total Length	Length completed in km	Length under implementation	Balance for award (in km)
GQ	5846	3713	133	—
NS and EW Corridor	7142	3291	3030	821
Port Connectivity	380	206	168	06
NHDP Phase-III	12,109	659	1816	9624
NHDP Phase-V	6500	77	953	5470
TOTAL	32939	10705	6283	15951

Statement-II

Details of steps taken by the Government for early completion of the project

(a) The Contracts are regularly monitored at various levels such as by Supervision Consultant, Project Directors, Senior officers of NHAI. Progress reviews are also held at the level of Chairman, NHAI, Secretary, Department of Road Transport and Highways.

(b) State Governments have appointed Senior officers as nodal officers for resolving problems associated with implementation of the NHDP such as land acquisition, removal of utilities, forest/pollution/environment clearances etc. These nodal officers hold periodic meetings to review the projects and take action to resolve the problems.

(c) A Committee of Secretaries has been constituted under Cabinet Secretary to address inter-ministerial and Centre — State issues such as land acquisition, utility shifting, environment approvals, clearance of ROBs.

(d) The procedure of issue of Land Acquisition notifications has been simplified. Earlier all the notification under NH Act were vetted by the Ministry of Law. Recently, an amendment has been made in the Allocation of Business Rules by which these notifications are not required to be sent to the Ministry of Law. The Ministry of Law has approved the standard formats of various notifications keeping in view the similar nature of the notifications of Land Acquisition.

(e) To expedite the construction of ROBs an officer of the Railways has been posted to NHAI to coordinate with Ministry of Railways. MOU has also been signed with M/s. IRCON for construction of some of the ROBs.

(f) Action has been taken against non performing contractors and they are not allowed to bid for future projects unless they improve the performance in existing contracts.

(g) Steps have been taken to improve cash flow problems of contractors by granting interest bearing discretionary advance at the request of contractor, release of retention money against bank guarantee of equal amount, deferment of recovery of advances (on interest basis) and relaxation in minimum IPC amount.

Statement-III

Details of Meetings

Sl. No.	Date	Meeting held by	State Government concerned
1.	13.2.2008	Secretary (RT&H)	Chief Secretaries of State Government.
2.	24.6.2008	Minister (S, RT&H)	State Highways Ministers.
3.	16.2.2009	Secretary	All Secretaries of State PWDs.

Inland-coastal shipping

1126. SHRIMATI RENUBALA PRADHAN:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to integrate inland water transportation and coastal shipping to boost river-sea shipping;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the status of Orissa State under this project;

(d) whether it is proposed to be taken up under PPP mode; and

(e) how far this project would help to boost tourism alongside rivers/coastal regions of Orissa State?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (e) River — Sea shipping for transportation of cargo is already active in some areas of the country namely Goa, Gujarat, West Bengal, Mumbai etc. The Working Group on Shipping and Inland Water Transport for preparation of Eleventh Plan had *inter alia* proposed for integration of Inland Water Transport (IWT) and Coastal Shipping as one of the approaches for development of IWT sector during Eleventh Plan. Accordingly, efforts are being made to finalise the design of a prototype cargo vessel which can operate both in inland and coastal waters such as Paradip in Orissa to Kolkata/Farakka/Bangladesh. Construction of the prototype vessel is proposed to be made with public funds but on its successful testing the same may be conducted either in public